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ABSTRACT

Little is known about the science and practice of cross-cultural clinical supervision and almost nothing is known about minority trainees' preparation for supervision competency with a minority supervisor. To fill this void, the supervision contents, processes, and outcomes related to the minority-minority supervision dyad are examined in this study. The focus is on the general critical issues with which the minority supervisor and supervisee might be confronted. Its purpose is to stimulate thinking about how: (1) individual minority supervisors might become better prepared to engage and provide an appropriate climate for optimal professional development of racial/ethnic minority trainees; and (2) training programs and sites might begin to rethink how they might better prepare themselves and trainees to provide the most effective supervision. Emphasis is placed on the important role of the senior professional's ability to facilitate the development of the student from novice to autonomously functioning professional. Some of the negative experiences that racial/ethnic minorities may face in graduate training, and some of the potential challenges that both supervisor and supervisee might encounter are detailed. Recommendations toward minimizing the potential for negative outcomes and some of the necessary structural components for programs are offered. (RJM)

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The minority-minority supervision dyad: General programmatic and personal issues for the supervisor and the supervisee

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The minority-minority supervision dyad:

General programmatic and personal issues for the

supervisor and the supervisee

Introduction

Little is known about the science and practice of cross-cultural clinical supervision (Brown & Landrum-Brown, 1995) and almost nothing is known about minority trainees' preparation for supervision competency with minority supervisor. This training and research gap presents a particularly unique challenge to rectify for several reasons. First, most training programs consist of predominantly White faculty and trainees. Consequently, majority-minority dyads would be most likely to occur. Second, multicultural counseling training typically targets the need for an increase in majority group trainees' behavioral and cognitive flexibility in relation to increased self- and other-awareness. Often minority trainees are assumed to know what needs to be known for maintaining effective working alliances with those who may differ culturally, but share racial/ethnic minority status. Third, many training programs have no coursework specifically addressing counseling supervision. When such courses do exist, the existence of supervision practica are not the norm. Opportunity for minority-minority dyad training opportunities are rare and trainees may often be confronted with experiences unprepared.

The purpose of this paper is to address the supervision contents, processes, and outcomes related to the unique minority-minority supervision dyad. The general critical issues with which the minority supervisor and supervisee might uniquely be confronted will be addressed. The influence of factors such as the minority representation among faculty, training staff, and student

cohort, the professional status (i.e., notoriety within the profession, senior versus junior faculty status, etc.) of the minority supervisor, the relationship of the supervisee among majority peers, the popularity and/acceptability of the faculty member with colleagues, and the racial/ethnic minority group membership of the supervisor and the supervisee will be presented and discussed as issues to be addressed prior to and/or during the first face-to-face supervision meeting. Strategies for mediating and circumventing possible negative supervision content, process, and outcomes during the initial contact will be presented and discussed.

Counseling Supervision

Supervision is the act of overseeing the development of therapeutic competence in a fellow practitioner (Holloway, 1992) and the articulation, examination, and management of factors affecting supervisory relationships are critical (Brown & Landrum-Brown, 1995). All supervisors, both majority and minority, must be willing and able to create a learning environment that will enhance trainees' skills in constructing relevant frames of reference from which to devise effective strategies in work with clients (Holloway, 1992). Supervision entails assisting trainees in being able to see with little or no assistance what they need most to see in working with clients (Schon, 1983).

This very important role of professional education depends on the more senior professionals ability to faciltate the development of the student from novice to autonomously functioning professionals (Holloway, 1992). In an attempt to more clearly understand the complex and dynamic character of the process of supervision, Holloway (1990) developed a 'map' that indicated the interplay between what the supervisor and supervisee both bring to the relationship. Supervisor and supervisee characteristics have been acknowledged as being critical

factors in influencing optimal outcomes in supervision. Brown and Landrum-Brown (1995) contend that the attitudes, knowledge, and skills of all supervisor parties, as well as their personal characteristics, modes of relating, and concerns, can reflect or express cultural influences. Given this highlighting of personal qualities of each of these parties, it would seem important for senior professionals to not only develop the specific qualities, but assist trainees in the development of these qualities as well.

The first step in this process of character development and modeling to trainees is the review of the research intended to identify how we must be to provide the best supervision to trainees. In a study designed to identify those personal qualities that would make an ideal supervisor, Carifio and Hess (1987) found that the most effective supervisors were individuals who were able to exhibit high levels of empathy, understanding, unconditional positive regard, flexibility, concern, attention, investment, curiosity, and openness. Supervisors with more counseling experience were found to provide the highest levels of facilitative conditions (i.e., being more verbal, engaging in self-disclosure more, and provided more direct instruction of counseling skills (Stone, 1980; Sundblad & Feinberg, 1972; Worthington, 1984a). Hilton, Russell, and Salmi (1995) found that supervisees in the high-support condition (i.e., head nodding, smiling, minimal encouragers, use of counselor name, frequent eye contact, warm, encouraging, and approving voice tone, and use of hand gestures) evaluated supervision more favorably than did those receiving low-support supervision, these positive evaluations of supervision. In addition, Cook and Helms (1988) reported that in supervision, supervisee perceptions of the supervisors' liking and positive feelings toward the supervisee were significant

predictors for relationship satisfaction. How we, as senior professionals, ought to be in relationship to our trainees in supervision appears to be somewhat well-established.

Though we appear to know how we should behave within the supervision dyad and that that manner exhibits personal qualities that would most likely be considered valuable in any working relationship(Holloway, 1992), it would seem reasonable that all supervisees, majority and minority trainees, would benefit greatly as recipients of this warm, positive, and supportive regard. However, this does not appear to be the case for many racial/ethnic minority trainees.

Racial/Ethnic Minority Supervisees

The negative experiences of racial/ethnic minorities in graduate training is well documented in the literature as well as in the conversations among faculty and staff who are considered safe (American Psychological Association of Graduate Students Committee on Ethnic Minority Affairs, 1996; Cook & Helms, 1988; McNeill, Hom, & Perez, 1995; McNeill, 1996; McRoy, Freeman, Logan, & Blackmon, 1986). Comments from peers (i.e., "You're a minority student, you don't have to worry about getting into a doctoral program"; "you're guaranteed an internship because you are a minority why worry about the selection process"; that multicultural counseling course is just white bashing and political correctness") can be experienced as disconcerting and denigrating, particularly for are in training programs wherein such statements are not refuted by program faculty. Vander Kolk (1974) found that Black supervisees anticipated less supervisor empathy, respect, and congruence than White supervisees. Many racial/ethnic minority may, as novice, bring to the role of counselor additional burdens that majority trainees do not. In addition, some of these trainees will not share the content of this additional burden due to not feeling safe and fearing negative judgment (McRoy, Freeman, Logan, & Blackmon, 1986).

Supervisors who agree with these perspectives or who deny that such activities exist among trainees would most likely encourage the discussion of resulting feelings and the impact such might have on functioning as a professional. The result is that many racial and ethic minority student often experience varying degrees of discrimination, isolation, racism, and differential treatment resulting in feelings of confusion, anger, outrage, and discouragement, which they say or may not choose to disclose and that program faculty, directors of training, and clinical supervisors may remain unaware of these experiences and feelings (McNeil, 1996). Trainees may be forced to suffer in silence, yet expected to exhibit levels of counseling competence and academic performance similar to that of peers who are not exposed to such personal attach and damage.

From those who do believe that these experiences for racial/ethnic trainees do occur and that managing these experiences are and should be a part of professional development strongly recommend programmatic action that will serve to attend to this discriminating exposure in the training setting. One recommendation is that these race and ethnicity related issues should be addressed within the supervisory relationship (Hunt, 1987; McNeil, 1996; McNeil, Hom, & Perez, 1995; Vasquez & McKinley, 1982; Zuniga, 1987). To be able to effectively attend to these needs of racial/ethnic minority trainees, supervisors must not view such issues as personal and outside the realm of clinical supervision (McNeil, 1996); and, supervisors must be knowledgeable in both traditional counseling models and minority theory and intervention (Guitierrez, 1982). It is assumed that supervisors willingness to encourage trainees to attend to and discuss these issues within supervision will have the outcome of supervisees doing so. This recommendation may result in limited outcomes given that McRoy et al. (1988) found that most trainees avoided

discussing both supervisory relationship problems and client problems surrounding cultural issues and expressed discomfort doing so even though approximately 50% of them perceived their supervisors as " very sensitive' to racial and cultural differences. Because of the nature of ethnic and race relations in the United States, it is reasonable for racially and ethnically different others to approach one another cautiously. That caution is likely to be at high levels in supervisory relationships, in which European Americans are more likely to be the supervisors and racial and ethic others are more likely to be the supervisees. (Brown & Landrum-Brown, 1995). Clearly another strategy must be attempted in conjunction with this recommendation.

The second recommendation to address the unique experiences of racial/ethnic minority trainees is the increased hiring of racial/ethnic minority faculty and staff in training sites (Bernstein, Wade, & Hofmann, 1987; Brown & Landrum-Brown, 1995; Helms & Carter, 1991; Reed, 1988; Sue & Zane, 1987). Given that some minority trainees report a wish to be supervised by a supervisor who shares their racial/ethnic minority status, it would appear that meeting this request might result in a more open discussion of the critical issues with which they are confronted in training. It is assumed that the presence of racial/ethnic minorities will mediate some of the pain of discrimination experienced by minority trainees.

Given that supervision and training in general takes place in a context, the influence of organizational variables on supervision must be acknowledged (Cole, Kolko, & Craddick, 1981; Dodd, 1986; Holloway, 1992). Altering the racial/ethnic complexion of the training staff/faculty by increasing the representation of minorities would certainly portray a distinctly different message of a commitment to diversity that in programs with no or limited representation. This would be true even moreso when accomplished in addition to effective recruitment and admission

of a critical representation of racial/ethnic minorities. Such activities will increase the probability of the occurrence of the minority-minority supervision dyad. Though the author believes that it is within these dyads that optimal levels of professional and counseling skill development can occur for many minority trainees, this unique opportunity must also be carefully examined for hidden challenges with which the minority supervisor and supervisee might be confronted. Both positive implications for these special dyads and the related challenges will be addressed in the following section.

The Racial/Ethic Minority Supervisor and the Minority Supervisee

Most of the literature addressing the issue of race in supervision addresses the majority-minority dyad. Literature and research seldom address the unique issues associated with the minority-minority dyad in supervision. Consequently, little public dialogue has occurred addressing how within group diversity among racial/ethnic minorities (i.e., socioeconomic status, degrees of assimilation, cultural differences, racial and ethnic identity status, etc.) and shared experiences (i.e., disenfranchisement and social and economic oppression, alienation and isolation among majority peers, struggles with adjustment to majority culture) might both positively and negatively impact the dynamics of this relationship. The following section presents a list of the potential positive outcomes and the challenges related to the minority-minority supervision dyad.

Potential Positive Outcomes

Supervisor

1. An opportunity to reflect on accomplishments and strategies used to attain current professional status.

2. An opportunity to reflect on future goals as you assist trainee in identifying priorities and shaping future professional goals.
3. An opportunity to experience validation from one who looks like you.
4. An opportunity to experience personal satisfaction of having something of value to offer to one who would most benefit; the personal satisfaction of 'giving back'.
5. An opportunity to expand current professional network of racial/ethnic minority colleagues.
6. An opportunity to receive meaningful information and feedback that you might not have received or heard otherwise.

Supervisee

1. Receipt of nurturing and validation for the supervisee.
2. Opportunities for supervisee to have an advocate within the training setting.
3. Being with someone who looks like you and/or understands your daily dilemmas and struggles within the context of a majority setting.
4. Opportunity for developing and expanding professional networks with other minority and/or minority sensitive majority colleagues.
5. An opportunity to receive meaningful information and feedback that you might not have received or heard otherwise.

Potential Challenges for both supervisor and supervisee

1. Maintaining Boundary and Focus in supervisory relationship.
2. Evaluation error of counseling competency.
3. Evaluation error of supervisory relationship.

4. Concerns of confidentiality and anonymity given small population.
5. Heighten dormant negative feelings and unresolved feelings among various groups of racial/ethnic minorities represented within supervision dyad, among faculty/staff, and among trainees.
6. Heighten unresolved negative feelings between minority and majority faculty/staff and among trainees.
7. Receiving information and feedback that you do not want to hear or that conflicts with your perception of self and others.

Recommendations toward Minimizing the Potential for Negative Outcomes

This section presents recommendations for minimizing the potential for negative outcomes in the minority-minority supervision dyad. Recommendations are presented addressing three specific points of intervention: the self as supervisor; activities within the supervision relationship; and the context wherein supervision occurs. Though these recommendations are presented to specifically address racial/ethnic minority-minority supervision dyad, the author believes the some of the recommendations and related benefits might apply to other supervision dyads as well. Each area will be briefly discussed during the presentation.

Supervisor Self-Evaluation

The author recommends that it would be important that supervisors not only attend to the content of the response to each of the following questions, but their affective responses as well. After doing so, it would seem important that supervisors then ask the question: How might my responses and feelings about my responses influence the supervision process and content?

1. What is my place or level of connectedness within the profession?
2. What is the extent and what have been the outcomes of my counseling experiences? with racial/ethnic minority clients?
3. What is the extent of my multicultural counseling training?
4. What is the extent of my supervision training?
5. What has been the outcomes of supervision with minority supervisees? (Identify outcomes for each racial or ethnic trainee supervised.)
6. What has been the outcomes of supervision with majority supervisees?
7. What is my place among minority colleagues in the profession and within the most
8. local setting? majority colleagues?
9. What is my status within the local faculty/staff hierarchy?
10. What is the perceived status of member of my racial/ethnic group within the hierarchy in the most local setting?
11. What is my reputation among minority trainees? majority trainees?
12. What are my beliefs about, attitudes toward, and experiences with members of the racial/ethnic group represented by my next supervisee?

Structural Components of Supervision

1. Development of a Supervision Portfolio and encouraging supervisee to do the same.
2. Keeping supervision process notes.
3. Engaging in preparation time for each supervision session (Bernard & Goodyear, 1992; Goldberg, 1985).

4. Periodically audio-taping supervision sessions throughout the relationship (Ward, Kagan, & Krathwohl, 1972).

5. With the supervisee: engage in mutual sharing and negotiation of supervisor/supervisee roles and expectations of the supervisory relationship; write down clearly defined and agreed upon goals and expectations of both supervisor and supervisee resulting from the negotiation; identify and discuss reasonableness and potential barriers to meeting these expectations; and, edit original expectations and make copies of the final decisions for both supervisor and supervisee (Ellis & Dell, 1986; Ellis, Dell, & Good, 1988; Friedlander, Ward, & Ferrin, 1984; Hess, 1983; Holloway, 1984; Menne, 1975).

6. Provide multiple opportunities for supervisor and supervisee written evaluations throughout and at the end of the supervisory relationship including time for discussion and questions of outcomes (Make sure that evaluations address both the supervision relationship and that between the supervisee (counselor) and the client(s) (Efstation, Patton, & Kardash, 1990; Hansen, 1965; Kennard, Stewart, & Gluck, 1987; Holloway, 1987; 1988a).

7. Provide opportunities for client evaluation of the counseling process and outcome (Galassi & Trent, 1987; Holloway, 1984; Lambert & Arnold, 1987; Worthington, 1987).

Organizational Structural Components

1. Development of a required Supervision course infused with content addressing the influence of race and ethnicity on the supervision process, a laboratory, and a practicum.
2. Encouragement and support of trainees' engagement in research addressing issues and critical factors involved in multicultural and cross-cultural counseling supervision to fill the gap in the literature.
3. Development of a climate that strategically supports and nurtures the development of healthy working alliances among faculty/staff and among trainees.

Summary

The primary objective of this paper was to stimulate thinking about how: 1) individual minority supervisors might become better prepared to effectively engage and provide an appropriate climate for optimal professional development of racial/ethnic minority trainees; and, 2) training programs and sites might begin to rethink how they might better prepare themselves and trainees to provide the most effective supervision. As minority representation in training sites and within student cohorts increase, enhanced awareness and the examination of the issues related to and dynamics within the minority-minority supervision dyad would appear essential. Recommendation for future research to investigate this unique supervision relationship is strongly suggested.

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